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Message Text

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12
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /078 W
---------- 107990
R 200043Z DEC 75
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6292
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USNMR SHAPE
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR
AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
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AMCONSUL LYON

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AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE
AMCONSUL NICE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MILI, PLAB, PINT, FR
SUBJECT: DEBATE OVER THE MILITARY: THE LEFT RESPONDS -- SORT OF

REF: PARIS 32233

SUMMARY. UNDER THE GENERAL RUBRIC OF PROTEST AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT'S "ANTI-SOCIAL AND REPRESSIVE" POLICIES, OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES AND UNIONS MOUNTED LARGE DEMONSTRATIONS IN PARIS AND PROVINCIAL CITIES DECEMBER 18. WHILE DEMONSTRATIONS WERE SUCCESSFUL IN TERMS OF NUMBERS PARTICIPATING, THEY ALSO REFLECTED THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE OPPOSITION IS DIVIDED OVER HOW TO DEAL WITH SOLDIERS' ORGANIZATIONS AND MALAISE IN THE ARMED FORCES. ELSEWHERE, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HAS REPORTEDLY CALLED UPON PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING TO RELEASE INDIVIDUALS DETAINED ON CHARGES OF FOMENTING DEMORALIZATION IN THE MILITARY. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING SEVERAL DAYS OF DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS, OPPOSITION PARTIES AND UNIONS (CGT-CFDT-FEN) ORGANIZED LARGE DEMONSTRATIONS IN MAJOR CITIES THROUGHOUT FRANCE DECEMBER 18. DEMONSTRATIONS, IN CONTRAST TO LARGELY UNSUCCESSFUL WORK STOPPAGES ALSO PLANNED FOR DECEMBER 18, WERE IMPRESSIVE IN TERMS OF NUMBERS MARCHING UNDER WINDY, NEAR-FREEZING CONDITIONS. IN PARIS, SOCIALIST (PS) LEADER FRANCOIS MITTERRAND, LEFT RADICAL PRESIDENT ROBERT FABRE, CGT AND CFDT UNION CHIEFS GEORGES SEGUY AND EDMOND MAIRE, AND COMMUNIST (PFC) ROLAND LEROY (FILLING IN FOR PARTY HEAD GEORGES MARCHAIR, CURRENTLY IN CUBA) LED AN ESTIMATED 20,000
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MARCHERS THROUGH THE STREETS. IN THEIR WAKE FOLLOWED SEVERAL THOUSAND OTHER DEMONSTRATORS, COMPOSED OF UNIFIED SOCIALIST PARTY (PSU) MEMBERS AND ELEMENTS OF THE MORE EXTREME LEFT.

2. FOR MOST OBSERVERS, THE PHYSICAL SEPARATION OF THE TWO MARCHES (INSURED BY CGT WARDENS) DISCOUNTED THE TURNOUT BY NICELY SYMBOLOZING THE DEGREE TO WHICH DEBATE

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OVER SOLDIERS' ORGANIZATIONS CONTINUES TO DIVIDE THE LEFT. PCF, PS AND CGT LEADERS CLEARLY WOULD LIKE TO PUT BEHIND THEM WHAT HAS BECOME A NO-WIN ISSUE AND HAD HOPED TO USE THE DECEMBER 19 DEMONSTRATION TO MOVE PUBLIC ATTENTION TO MORE PROFITABLE ISSUES.

3. THUS DURING THEIR PRE-DEMONSTRATION PLANNING SESSION, THEY REFUSED PLEAS BY CFDT AND PSU LEADERS TO INCORPORATE CALLS FOR RELEASE OF THOSE DETAINED FOR ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE OVERALL THEME FOR DECEMBER 18 MARCH. WHILE THE CFDT EVENTUALLY AGREED TO PARTICIPATE IN AN UMBRELLA PROTEST AGAINST "ANTI-SOCIAL AND REPRESSIVE" GOVERNMENT POLICIES, THE PSU PULLED OUT TO ORGANIZE ITS OWN MARCH.

4. MOREOVER, BANNERS WITHIN MAJOR PARTY AND UNION MARCH INDICATED THAT, EVEN AMONG ELEMENTS OF MORE MODERATE LEFT, DIVISIONS REMAIN ON HOW TO HANDLE THE ISSUE. PCF AND CGT MARCHERS TOTALLY AVOIDED ANY REFERENCE TO SOLDIERS' ORGANIZATIONS WHILE SOME CFDT BANNERS CALLED FOR UNIONS IN THE ARMY AND A NUMBER OF PS MILITANTS DEMANDED FREEDOM FOR DETAINEES ACCUSED OF UNIONIZING ACTIVITIES.

5. ELSEWHERE ON DECEMBER 18, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORTEDLY SENT A TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT GISCARD CALLING FOR RELEASE OF INDIVIDUALS DETAINED FOR ALLEGEDLY FOMENTING DEMORALIZATION WITHIN THE MILITARY. REASONS GIVEN WERE THE "VAGUE" NATURE OF THE CHARGE, USE OF SPECIAL SECURITY COURT AND SUPPOSED VIOLATION OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION.
RUSH

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